

## Check Out Low-Interest Rate State Ag Loans

Tom J Bechman [tbechman@farmprogress.com](mailto:tbechman@farmprogress.com)

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Indiana's State Treasurer Richard Mourdock made headlines before the end of the year when he announced a low-interest loan program for Hoosier livestock farmers. At the time, he noted he was reacting primarily to information provided by the Indiana State Department of agriculture, and was doing what he could to help livestock producers facing high feed prices after last spring's late freeze and a brutally hot, dry summer.

In an unusual move, Mourdock makes headlines again with the same program. He announced recently that he was cutting interest rates on the loans to 3.5% for eligible producers. The program is called the Treasurer's Agricultural Loan Program or TALP. He's hoping the even lower interest rate will give an even bigger boost to livestock producers suffering through a financially tough winter with livestock to feed and little to feed them, at least little that they can secure at affordable prices. The interest rate when the program was first announced was around 5%.

Livestock farmers who are eligible for the TALP low-interest loan program include those that raise beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep and goats. Hog producers are not eligible for this program offered by the treasurer.

Here's how TALP works. The state Treasurer's office works in cooperation with local banks and credit unions to make the program click. The Office of the State Treasurer purchases a certificate of deposit from a local lender at a reduced rate. Then in turn the local lender provides a loan to a qualifying farmer at a reduced rate. Until this latest announcement, the low-interest loan rate farmers could achieve through the program was about 5%.

The Treasurer of the State of Indiana has the authority to adjust the interest rate in this program quarterly. Mourdock simply exercised his right to change the rate, reducing it further. He explains that he was concerned about the slowdown of the overall economy and the dire straits some producers find themselves in this winter, paying typically \$8.50, on average, for a small square bale of hay.

Certificates of deposit are funded on the 1st and 15th of each month. If you want to learn more about the program, call 317-232-6386, or visit the Indiana Office of the State Treasurer on the Web at: [www.in.gov/tos](http://www.in.gov/tos).

This program is in no way connected to federal disaster low-interest-loan or payment programs administered by the Farm Service Agency. The state program offered by the Treasurer of the State of Indiana stands on its own merit.